

PRESS RELEASE

January 14, 2010

The League of Women Voters of Blount County is pleased to announce the winners of its Annual High School Essay Contest. The First Place Award and \$200 U.S. Savings Bond is given to Chesney Breazeale, and the Second Place Award and \$100 U.S. Savings Bond is given to Hannah Stinnett. The essay topic for 2009 was *“In your opinion, what are the three most important issues facing Blount County government as we approach the 2010 General Elections and why?”*

Chesney is a senior at William Blount High School, and in identifying the most important issues facing Blount County government, she selected three social problems that she believes adversely affect the quality of life in this county: the teen pregnancy rate, drug and alcohol abuse, and people who cannot afford adequate health care. Chesney wrote, “When time comes to hold the 2010 Blount County election, all of the candidates should be open to any ideas. Politics is all about helping people and their families.” She went on to say, “To make Blount County a better community, everyone will have to pitch in and do their part to help make these three issues better. None...will ever be completely resolved but with effort and work, Blount County could be a better place.”

Hannah is also a senior at WBHS, and she selected the teen pregnancy rate, housing for the homeless, and the need for an adequate animal shelter as her three issues facing Blount County. She writes that “people feel that the results of this election will better our well-being and moral standing among other counties in not only the East Tennessee region, but throughout the entire state as well. ....If people come together, we can help those in need while providing for a better community.”

The mission of the League of Women Voters of Blount County includes educational aims, encouraging “people to engage fully in the political process.” Autumn Hall, Co-President, stated that the essay contest is a way to encourage high school students in Blount County “to think about civic issues and express their concerns as they become voters and possibly candidates in the future. It is also important for current voters to hear what concerns our students about our county. The LWVBC will be including issues these Essay winners have raised in the 2010 Candidates’ Survey.” The annual essay competition is held in the fall and is open to any Blount County high school student, grades 9-12. For more information, visit the LWVBC website at [discoveret.org/lwvbc/](http://discoveret.org/lwvbc/).